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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

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SOURCE Newspapers as indicated.

COMMUNIST CHINA WANTS OIL AND STEEL PRODUCTS FROM CEYLON

[Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.]

According to a Chinese-language pro-KMT newspaper published in Penang, Communist China has agreed to buy 10,000 tons of coconut oil from Ceylon based on terms stipulated in the General Trade Agreement with Ceylon recently concluded in Peiping. This information was divulged by informed businessmen in Colombo who said the price bid by Communist China was 270 US dollars per ton.

The same newspaper said that the Chinese Communists are also interested in Ceylon's spikenard and cinnamon oils, samples of which have been sent to China.(1)

In an earlier issue, the Penang newspaper reported that Communist China also wants steel products from Ceylon. Since steel negotiations with individual Ceylon exporters were unsuccessful, Shanghai industrial and commercial organizations have recently directed their requests for steel to the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce. Some businessmen in Colombo had hoped to import Japanese steel products for re-export to China, but their plan was not approved by Ceylon export control authorities.(2)

A Hanoi Chinese-language pro-KMT newspaper quoted an official of the Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry to the effect that the Japanese government will refuse approval of applications for the export of strategic materials to Ceylon if investigation reveals that Ceylon intends to resell the goods to Communist China. Applications for exports to Ceylon pending before the Japanese government involve steel plates, barbed wire, etc.(3)

SOURCES

1. Penang, Kuang-hua Jih-pao, 17 Dec 52
2. Ibid., 7 Dec 52
3. Hanoi, T'ai-p'ing-yang Jih-pao, 19 Nov 52

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REPORT NO.

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SOURCE Newspapers as indicated.

HOUSING, SOCIAL, AND EDUCATION PLANS FOR VIETNAM

Summary: Several plans and proposals have been mentioned by leading government officials and writers during the past months to improve social and economic conditions in Vietnam. They include plans for housing, minimum wages, family allowances, and school construction.

GIVES GOVERNMENT HOUSING CONSTRUCTION FIGURES -- Saigon, Saigon Moi, 20 Nov 52

According to the Secretary-General of the National Reconstruction Lottery, who spoke in Dalat on 10 November 1952, more than 26 million piasters have been realized from the National Reconstruction Lottery, held seven times since its beginning about a year ago. The Secretary-General also revealed that 680 housing units, costing 23,208,000 piasters, have been built and that loans, amounting to 3,539,800 piasters, have been made to needy families for building and repairing purposes from receipts of this lottery.

The Secretary-General said that the lottery has also helped the government to provide emergency funds to build temporary housing for the victims of the recent typhoon in Central and South Vietnam.

Government plans, according to the Secretary-General, call for construction of additional 340 units, costing 10,500,000 piasters, and loans amounting to 6,441,000 piasters during the remaining 1952 fiscal year.

GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL DISCUSSES LIVING CONDITIONS -- Saigon, Tieng Chuong, 17 Dec 52

During an interview, Dang Van Ly, director of Labor Inspection and Social Security of South Vietnam, stated to the correspondent of this newspaper that insecurity is the main cause of the difficult living conditions in Vietnam. "In fact," he said, "it is due to insecurity in many regions of South Vietnam that the people have been pouring into Saigon-Cholon District, where there are already some 2 million inhabitants." After arriving in the capital, most of them soon spend all their money and have to accept employment paying very low wages, according to Ly.

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Another reason for the difficult living conditions of the people, said Ly, is the problem of production. Since the majority of people only want essential foodstuffs, such as rice, meat, fish, and vegetables, the director suggested that efforts be made to increase the production of these goods. He also proposed that a study be made by the government to relocate a certain number of people from the Saigon-Cholon District to the newly pacified regions where they can be employed in more productive activities.

Speaking of the increase of the minimum wages of the workers, Ly stated that such an increase would be more prejudicial than advantageous to the workers and that it would be harmful to the entire country. He warned that an increase in wages would bring about an increase in the cost of living.

At present, Ly said, 10 billion piasters are in circulation throughout the country, and if the cost of living continues to rise, the government will be forced to issue more banknotes. He again warned of the danger which would arise from this action.

The Tieng Chuong correspondent, however, is of the opinion that the workers can no longer stand the present high cost of living and hopes that the government will approve a wage increase and at the same time apply severe measures against inflation.

ANNOUNCES NEW FAMILY ALLOWANCE RATES -- Saigon, Anh Sang, 5 Feb 53

Le Thang, Minister of Labor and Social Action, held a press conference on 4 February to explain the main points of Decree No 2 of the Premier, concerning the family allowances granted to all employees of private firms and concerning the purpose of the Compensation Fund for family allowances.

The minister declared that from now on the Office of Labor Inspection will have control over the Compensation Fund. The minister also said that the employers regardless of their nationality must contribute to the Compensation Fund and pay family allowances to their employees. If they do not respect these regulations, he warned, they will be summoned before the court and be punished, and in certain cases may be deprived of their citizenship.

The minister explained that in the past the rates for family allowances varied according to nationality and region. For example, he said, in South Vietnam, wives of Vietnamese and French employees received 15 percent and each of their children up to the fifth one received 6 percent of the wage of the head of the family, but in North Vietnam, wives of Vietnamese employees received 15 percent and each child up to the fifth one received 5 percent of the wage of the head of the family, while wives of French employees received 15 percent and their first child 10 percent, the second 12 percent, the third 15 percent, etc.

The new decree, according to Thang, however, stipulates that there will be uniform rates of 15 percent for the wife, illegible percent for each child up to the fifth one, and 3 percent each for the rest of the children, regardless of nationality or the region in which they live.

URGES LARGER APPROPRIATION FOR EDUCATION -- Saigon, Tieng Doi, 26 Sep 52

In a feature article entitled "To Reduce the Number of Prisons and Increase the Number of Schools," Le Van Thu writes:

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There is a great shortage of schools in Vietnam because many of them were destroyed during 1946 and 1947 and many others are now occupied by troops. It is understood that the Vietnamese government has gone to considerable effort to build new schools, but the number of school children continues to increase and there are not enough schools to accommodate all of them.

In the Saigon-Cholon District, the number of children attending public schools amounts to 28,000 for the current school year. In addition, more than 21,000 children attend private or Catholic schools.

The educational standard in many public schools is low because the schools lack discipline and the teaching staffs seldom have adequate training. Moreover, students in private schools are often allowed to skip grades because in a more advanced class they must pay higher tuition.

The government has appropriated only 886,000 piasters for the current educational budget. This figure does not even represent three tenths of one percent of the total Regional Budget of 310 million piasters. How, then, can schools be built when the budget is so small? How can Vice Premier Phan Van Giau's statement that prisons must be eliminated and schools must be built be realized?

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